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ABSTRACT

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONFERENCE WAS THE STIMULATION OF IDEAS CONCERNING NEW AREAS OF INQUIRY THAT NEED TO BE EXPLORED IN THE FIELD OF OCCUPATIONAL ORIENTATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE. THE CONFERENCE FEATURED SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS COVERING SIX BASIC TOPICS: (1) WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS? (2) TO WHAT EXTENT IS OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE A RATIONAL, ORDERED, SYSTEMATIC PROCESS? (3) WHAT CONTRIBUTIONS TO OCCUPATIONAL OUTCOME DOES THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE MAKE AND WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF THE POSITION OF THE ACTOR IN THAT STRUCTURE? (4) TO WHAT EXTENT ARE EXTRAPERSONAL SITUATIONS EFFECTIVE LIMITORS OR DETERMINANTS OF OCCUPATIONAL OUTCOME? (5) WHAT IS THE DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS LEADING TO AN INITIAL OCCUPATIONAL COMMITMENT? AND (6) WHAT IS THE CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT OF OCCUPATION OR CAREER AFTER THE INITIAL COMMITMENT? THE SUMMARY REPORTS OF EACH TOPIC ARE GIVEN; A MORE DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE DISCUSSION WILL FOLLOW. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MATERIALS AVAILABLE AT THE CONFERENCE IS INCLUDED. (CH)

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The Conference on

Unexplored Aspects of The Development of Occupational Goals of Youth

SUMMARIZERS' REPORTS

Sponsored by
THE
CENTER FOR RESEARCH IN
OCCUPATIONAL PLANNING
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
Eugene

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SUMMARIZERS' REPORTS OF

THE CONFERENCE ON UNEXPLORED ASPECTS OF

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL GOALS OF YOUTH

Held at the University of Oregon,
August 9 - 13, 1965

Sponsored by
The Center for Research in Occupational Planning

Conference Organizing Committee:
Robert A. Ellis, chairman
Martin H. Acker
Roy H. Rodgers

Edited by Benton Johnson,
with the assistance of
Joanne Kitchel

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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F O R E W O R D

This is a preliminary report of a conference on how youth develop occupational goals. The conference was sponsored by the Center for Research in Occupational Planning of the University of Oregon and was held for the purpose of stimulating ideas concerning new areas of inquiry that need to be explored in the field of occupational orientations of young people. The conference featured small group discussions covering six basic topics in this field. This publication contains the reports of the summarizers of each of these discussions.

The Center will publish a more detailed account of the small group discussions during 1966.

Additional copies of this preliminary report are available on request.

December 14, 1965 The Editor

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LIST OF TOPICS FOR SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

TOPIC I:

What is the structure of the decision-making process?

A. How do such factors as the status level of the occupation, the role characteristics of the occupation, the institutional locus of the occupation affect the process?

B. How are such dimensions as intensity, specificity, stability and realism involved in choosing occupations?

C. To what extent are occupational decisions related to other decisions which must be made at or near the same time?

D. To what extent do knowledge or information, perception, cognition, and such other psychological factors enter into the process of occupational choice?

TOPIC II:

To what extent is occupational choice a rational, ordered, systematic process?

A. What are the consequences of seeing it in this way?

B. To what extent does lack of order lead to "poor" consequences, while orderliness to "good" consequences?

C. What happens when unplanned events or opportunities present themselves to the individual?

D. Is it possible that chance is a major explanatory variable in occupational outcome?

TOPIC III:

What contributions to occupational outcome does the social structure make and what is the effect of the position of the actor in that structure?

A. Are lower class individuals different only in terms of their place in the social structure, or are there other aspects which make them different as well?

B. To what extent do ethnic group membership and other similar situations lead to different occupational outcomes?

C. Does the social structure place severe limitations on individuals or is the assumption of an open society valid?

D. How does sex, marital status, or educational level have an effect on occupational outcome?

TOPIC IV:

To what extent are extrapersonal situations effective limitors or determinants of occupational outcome?

A. What about such factors as the condition of the labor market, changes in technology?

B. How do resources which could not be anticipated, such as the Job Corps or other programs, affect occupational outcome?

C. Is occupational choice as a process different in a depressed area than it is in a vigorous economy?

TOPIC V:

What is the developmental process leading to an initial occupational commitment?

A. Is the Ginzberg hypothesis of a three-period development (i.e., fantasy choice, tentative choice, realistic choice) supported by the empirical data?

B. Is the process irreversible as Ginzberg suggests?

C. Is the developmental process the same for men as women, for lower class and upper class, for people in different cultures?

TOPIC VI:

What is the continuing development of occupation or career after the initial commitment?

A. What about the development of a second occupation?

B. Is a career different from an occupation?

C. Do people conceptualize themselves as being involved in a career, or do they simply see themselves in a set of connected occupations?

D. To what extent do people who are caught in obsolescent jobs go through the same process of occupational development or through a different process in the choosing of a replacement occupation?

The above topics were drawn from the statements and questions submitted by the conference participants.

SUMMARY OF TOPIC I

by

John O. Crites

I tried to think of different ways in which our discussions might be summarized. I thought perhaps the most understandable approach to take might be to consider the various questions which were posed to us and to which we attended and to try to summarize what was discussed and concluded with respect to each of these questions, and also to indicate where applicable what aspects of these questions were not discussed in the group.

Also, there were times when we undertook the discussion of other topics than those which were specified in the questions. I would like to allude to these and some of the things that were said about them. Then finally, although this was not set out in the summarizers' manual of operation (SOP), I have tried to draw some implications from the discussion we had for the research that you may want to plan.

I should begin by saying that no one in our group on Topic I has had an opportunity to see what I am reporting to the entire group, and consequently any omissions or inclusions which are made here are my own responsibility, and I will stand corrected after I've given you a picture, at least my picture, of what we talked about; so if any of you who were in that group can make additions or deletions afterwards, I would certainly appreciate it.

The general question with which the group was confronted was: What is the structure of the decision-making process? This general question was not directly approached by the group. We did not set out to analyze the structure, or what we conceived as the structure, of the decision-making process. We were somewhat sidetracked in the sense that we took up first the definition of vocational choice, or at least we led in after a little beating down of the grass to this problem

of defining vocational choice.

There were two points of view expressed. Generally summarizing them, one was that in a sense all behavior is choice behavior because all behavior involves the decision of whether to act or not to act, so that whenever we are confronted with a similar situation, we can make this choice. We did not go into the problem of the second topic, which was whether this is a rational choice or not.

The second point of view on this particular problem, the defining of vocational choice, was stated somewhat as follows: Choice behavior occurs only when there are two or more alternatives of approximately equal probablities of attainment. In other words, we define the choice-behavioral situation as one in which there are at least two alternative courses of action, or options, from which the individual may select, and the probabilities of attaining these different courses of action are essentially equal. We would make the assumption, you see, that in a situation where the probability is grossly in favor of one alternative compared with the others, this has a much higher probability or chance of being selected by the individual, so that to equate these alternatives in terms of their probability of attainment seems important from this point of view. So, we have the two points of view on the definition of choice.

Another significant aspect, it seemed, of our discussion of this problem of "What is the structure of the decision-making process?" concerned the idea that choice may involve either positive or negative decisions. That is, alternatives in the choice situation may either be selected by the individual (in this sense he is making a positive decision or statement), or they may be eliminated; thus, choice may result either from the selection of an alternative or a couple of alternatives (n alternatives), or choice may be arrived at by the elimination of alternatives. The person may either base his decision, his choices, upon his likes, his adient responses, to the alternatives that are presented to him, or he

may define the choice ultimately by eliminating alternatives which are presented to him.

This led into consideration of the importance of what has been called the exclusion process in vocational decision-making: To what extent is this an aspect of the structure of vocational choice, the narrowing down of alternatives to one or a few as a result of this exclusion process?

Another important aspect of choice behavior in the decision-making process which we considered was the different strategies which may be followed by the individual in making choices. It was proposed that there are individual differences in the strategies which are chosen or selected in coming to a decision about one's occupational future. Some individuals, for example, may actively choose, whereas others may only passively react to the stimuli which impinge upon them, i.e., the alternatives which are available to them. Different choice strategies might be, for example, the early crystallization of a choice based upon some special talent. We were at somewhat of a loss to specify in detail the various choice strategies but did feel that it was important to consider this particular problem as one for further research and study.

I should probably mention here that one of the choice strategies might be not to close the door on other alternatives. In other words, you say, "I'm going to pursue a course of training which will lead to an occupation as an accountant, but I'm not going to close the door on, say, closely related occupations for which I am also qualified."

We did not discuss, as I mentioned previously, the actual structure of the decision-making process, although some attention has been given to this in the literature. Dave Tiedeman, for example, has analyzed the process of decision-making into several stages and periods, the first stage being anticipation and the second stage being implementation and adjustment, and he breaks each of these

down into periods. Here he is referring not so much to life stages in the course of vocational development as stages in the individual's thinking about occupations.

Well, these were some of our many deliberations with respect to the general question which was framed for this particular topic: What is the structure of the decision-making process? With respect to the specific questions which fell under this general question, these were some of the things which we did discuss.

The first question was: "How do such factors as the status level of the occupation, the role characteristics of the occupation, the institutional locus of the occupation affect the process?" Here one of the more important points of discussion was to consider the different dimensions along which occupations might be classified, and how these various dimensions might serve as influencers or stimuli in the choice of an occupation. Three dimensions were identified. One was called status (this refers to the prestige level of the occupation, sometimes called occupational appeal). The second classification or categorization was by role, and here our reference was to the expected duties and tasks, and possibly also the folkways of the occupation. Then finally, the situs categorization referred to the location or place of the occupation in the economy, particularly with respect to the industrial classification dimension. These, then, were some of the things that were considered with respect to this first question.

The second question, "How are such dimensions as intensity, specification, stability and realism, involved in choosing occupations?" led to some of these deliberations. We considered some of the problems in defining and measuring realism of vocational choice, and I think that there was pretty general agreement that this is a very knotty problem, that at best the aspects of realism of vocational choice which we can assess are fairly specific in nature. It is difficult to get an over-all assessment of the realism of vocational choice which is objective.

Also, a question was raised whether realism can be meaningfully assessed except from an external frame of reference. In other words, it was pointed out that realism may have no meaning with respect to the individual's frame of reference, whether or not he is acting in a realistic way. Realism is defined from the observer's or investigator's standpoint.

The third question was, "To what extent are occupational decisions related to other decisions which must be made at or near the same time?" Here we had relatively little discussion, as I recall. I may be slipping some cogs here because I found that in writing this down I had to carefully differentiate between things said in one discussion and those that were said in another. My recollection is that we did not attend too closely to this question. The point was made that perhaps our interest is in general decision-making processes, not just vocational choice, but we did not pursue this line of thinking very extensively. One comment was made that this is possibly a productive line of investigation.

The fourth question, the last one to which we gave specific attention, was "To what extent do knowledge or information, conception, cognition, and such other psychological factors enter into the process of occupational choice?" Here there was some discussion of the role of discrimination learning in vocational development, where it has been found (at least there is some suggestion) that more mature individuals are better able to discriminate among the vocational stimuli which impinge upon them and also the non-vocational ones which are relevant to vocational choice. The point was made that it may be possible to have too much information about occupations. This is an interesting and intriguing notion; usually we counselors think of providing information without too much limit placed upon the amount of information acquired by the individual. It was pointed out, however, that too much information may have an inhibitory effect upon the choice of an occupation. Knowing too much about occupations may make

it more difficult to choose among them.

These, then, were some of the points which were made with respect to the questions which were asked as part of the conference structure. In addition, some other topics were discussed. I won't go into these in any detail to speak of, but I would like to mention them for completeness' sake and also because they do have some implications for research.

First, what is the relationship of family factors to decision-making? Actually, here we crossed topics, because this was considered in another topic, but it almost necessarily came in when we started considering generalities of the decision-making process. In other words, is occupational decision-making like decision-making in respect to marriage? Secondly, where can intervention be made in the choice process to assist individuals in developing their potentialities? And thirdly, what controls should be instituted to assess the effect upon subjects of participation in the study--in other words, should controls be implemented which will allow the investigators to assess the effects of their investigating these subjects?

Now, I would like to try to pull some implications from these deliberations for the CROP project. Here, these will be stated in question form and will draw upon some of the thoughts and comments that were made in our group. First, what variables are of interest (we considered this at some length): choices, plans, occupational outcomes, etc.? Is there just one variable, is there more than one variable, are these various variables of interest related to each other in some fashion? And, as a corollary, how can they be defined both conceptually and operationally? Here we had possibly some problem of communication in the sense that operational definitions are not always well received, nor are conceptual definitions. Possibly the way out of this bind is to devise operational definitions which are conceptually relevant and meaningful. Secondly, what are the

strategies individuals use to make choices or plans, or which lead to certain occupational outcomes? And how can these strategies be classified, if at all, and related to other variables? We considered some of the strategies which we could define rationally and debated whether or not the strategies that were identified as being used by individuals could be classified or not. This seemed to be an empirical question, one that might be open to research. Thirdly, what is the role of negative decisions in choosing and planning? Here I am referring to the exclusion process mentioned previously. Are the occupational outcomes different for individuals who make negative decisions as compared with those who make positive decisions?

Then finally, what variables which are significantly related to choices, plans, and outcomes, can be manipulated in order for the individual to achieve greater self-realization? In an applied sense, this is probably one of the ultimate outcomes of research which we conduct in this area, and I think was certainly of concern to many of us today, particularly Dave Bushnell, who asked, "After you have identified the relationship between your variables of interest, what can be done to change conditions so that individuals will be better able to realize their potentialities in the world of work?"

SUMMARY OF TOPIC II

by

Robert Dubin

I will be very brief, not because our session failed to be full of ideas, but because I thought we reached a rather remarkable consensus and therefore it is better worth your while to know what the consensus was rather than to find out how it was reached.

We agreed after some discussion--the usual type of discussion when the word "rational" is presented to a group of academics--that we were not dealing with a social process that is most adequately analyzed as a rational process. We addressed ourselves to whether this was an ordered process or a systematic process. The fact of orderliness has some notion of stages of development. Herein it seemed obvious that we were dealing with maturational processes; therefore there were stages of development, and surely we would be safe in calling occupational choice an ordered process.

So in essence the center of our discussion focused on whether the orderliness was systematic in character, and if so, what were some of the dimensions of the systematic qualities of occupational choice. I suppose the particular consensus we reached here was again a safe and illuminating consensus, namely, that we saw this as best modelled as a stochastic process, with unspecified choice points and with unspecified probabilities attaching to the alternatives that might be found at each of these choice points.

At this point we departed from the usual academic language and began to use what to me was both colorful, descriptive, and meaningful language. We talked about people being "locked into" or "locked out" of vocational opportunities and choices. We could now make some sense of this stochastic process. It became

evident that we could talk about people being "locked out" and mean by this that they have zero probabilities for at least some of the alternatives at given choice points. This turned out, interestingly enough, to be characteristic of both those at the top of the occupational scale and those at the bottom of the occupational scale. A locked-out Negro slum dweller was locked out because many alternatives at significant choice points had a literal zero probability for him, and therefore there was no need for him to consider them. Nor, if he were in fantasy to consider them, would they be meaningful alternatives for him.

We also pointed out that the college student in a medical education program was locked out of a number of alternatives where the probabilities were zero in the course of his preparing to enter his profession. So the meaning of "locked-out-ness" was that some alternatives for action have zero probability. But this did not determine how many remaining alternatives for action with other than zero probabilities would still remain at that choice point.

Here the colorful phrase "locked in" came to take on meaning. By locked in, translated into this framework, we meant that the probability was at or near 1. Therefore, locked out and locked in do not turn out to be two sides of the same coin; they turn out to be rather different meaningful descriptions of moving from one stage to another in getting involved in what I suspect is a good neutral phrase to use, namely, "occupational placement" rather than "occupational choice."

So we end up with an ordered and systematic process, the details of which remain to be specified. We did give some attention of a rather vigorous sort to the question: "Does the orderly and systematic character of this occupational assignment process have good or poor consequences?" I think at this point our values showed very strongly, and I think one could readily reconstruct the content of our discourse without my even attempting to summarize it.

We touched but I suspect could have elaborated with much greater detail the consequences of suddenly changing the probabilities of any given alternative from one value to another, because this is the way one might take into account chance in this orderly, systematic way of matching people with jobs. That is to say, when the probability moves from 1.0 to .25, is the character of this change the consequence of untoward events or is this serendipity operating?

I think this last point may indeed simply be my interpretation of what appears to be a logical consequence of the structure within which our thinking seemed to move. I have presented what strikes me as some of the orderliness and systematic character of the discourse in this group. I have obviously given you no flavor of the details, or of the colorfulness with which we matched wits and sometimes outwitted each other.

My colleagues were warned when I gave the first summary, which was even shorter than this, that if they wished a voice before the larger group, to please put in my mouth the words they wanted spoken and I would dutifully and with vehemence speak them. None took this opportunity, so they are responsible for what I misrepresented or ignored in our proceedings.

SUMMARY OF TOPIC III

by

William Sewell

In group session III we were concerned with the contribution that the social structure makes to occupational outcome. Like good sociologists, we of course defined social structure broadly but talked primarily about the stratification system. Since we had no data on the relationship of social structure to occupational outcome, we immediately shifted the topic and discussed primarily the question of the relationship between social structure and occupational aspirations or choice.

Here we did have some date from a well designed project which showed that occupational choice is clearly related to the position of the youth's family in the stratification structure. This evidence is in support of a number of other studies that have been made in the past, but unlike some of the other studies it was possible in this instance to control for sex (or at least to do the tables separately for sex) and for measured ability as indicated by scores on a common intelligence test. And we found that the association between social class and occupational choice, in this study as in many other studies, clearly indicated a relationship such that the higher the socioeconomic background, the higher the occupational choice, even with sex and intelligence controlled.

It is easy to overstate the influence of social class and sociologists tend, moreover, to overstate its influence. Despite large percentage differences in occupational plans and aspirations of the social classes, the variance explained by socioeconomic status is not very great. This of course raises a very interesting methodological question to which we devoted a good deal of time. We were in general agreement that the unreliability of our measurements of social class

and of occupational choice doubtless reduces the extent of correlation in a multiple regression sense. We also pointed out that there must be better ways of measuring both the independent and dependent variable and we each stated our prejudices about how this should be done. I won't go into the detail of that, however, at this time. We also reluctantly concluded that there probably are a lot of other factors as yet untested which help to explain the differences between the social classes.

We then turned to the question of why lower-class youth, as all the studies have shown, have lower occupational aspirations and achievement than youth from higher socioeconomic background. We each had our "favorite candidate" explanations for this, and I won't have time to give these in any detail. But I would like at least to list those explanations that various ones of us emphasized.

First, there was a good deal of discussion to the effect that there is inadequate socialization to achievement values and less stimulation of achievement needs in lower-class families than in middle-class families.

Secondly, it was pointed out that there are great differences in knowledge of educational and occupational opportunities between the different classes.

Third, it was pointed out that the parents, and relatives, of lower-class youth are powerless as sponsors for occupational entry and induction into the more favored occupations.

Four, it was agreed that the lack of adequate role models in the environment serves as a handicap for lower-class youth.

Fifth, it was pointed out that there are perceptual and cognitive deficits in the early experience of lower-class children which is an important factor in their poor school performances. This in turn results in still further deficits in learning and a consequent lowering of capacities as the child passes through the school system. Ultimately aspirations are lowered as the child's school

failures convince him of his inadequacies to meet the requirements of higher schooling and of higher occupational positions.

We then turned on the school system itself and some of us argued that the school serves as a barrier to the mobility of many lower-class children because it often fails to motivate or to reward lower-class children for their achievements, particularly since many of their achievements do not square with the achievement values and orientation of the school and its personnel. We also argued that the school system tends to place lower-class children in tracks in which they remain with few opportunities to get out and which lead to dead-end opportunities or no opportunities at all. It was argued by some that what is needed is careful research on the effects of experimental and demonstration programs which try through intensive efforts to improve the performance of lower-class children. In these programs emphasis is given to discovering areas of interest in which the lower-class child can achieve and be rewarded for these achievements. In the process not only is a more favorable self-image and sense of competence developed but also skills and coping techniques are emphasized which will permit the disadvantaged child to achieve upward mobility or at least to find a useful outlet for his talents.

There was a great deal of debate over the question of whether our society is becoming more or less open, in the sense that youth can achieve mobility on the basis of merit. The evidence for and against this was discussed with some warmth but without closure. Probably this was because one's views of the extent of the openness of our society seemed to depend upon what kind of evidence he looks at and what perspective he has in examining the evidence. For example, most of us were convinced that in terms of many studies of intergenerational mobility, the evidence seemed to indicate that our society is not any more closed than it was twenty, forty, or sixty years ago. In the case of career mobility

(mobility during the lifetime of an individual from his beginning job to the end) we agreed that the evidence is not as great, and it seems that one's conclusion depends on which subpopulation of the total population one is considering. Take for example, the lower-class slum-dwelling male youth of Negro background. Here the evidence seems to indicate that recent trends toward automation, higher educational requirements, certification requirements, etc., are closing off certain avenues to occupations formerly open to this group. In other words, structural changes are lowering the life chances of these groups. For other groups, however, we didn't reach any definite conclusion, although many opinions were expressed. The main conclusion we reached was that we need a great deal of study of career mobility and particularly studies of the career patterns of that great majority of the working force who are neither college graduates nor unemployables.

In the course of our discussion of the disadvantaged classes, several members of the group also felt that we needed good empirical evidence on a number of other points. First, what are the actual perceptions of members of the various social classes of the opportunities that are available to them? Second, to what extent do they feel that they can achieve or at least enter these occupations? Third, what does success mean to them? Is it confined to promotions and success within the occupational sphere or are there many other arenas in which success can be gained? Four, the extent to which lower-class people feel alienated in the society, and especially in their work roles. Fifth, the saliency of work as a means of satisfaction of personality needs as against other available satisfactions.

We then addressed the problem of our largest and favorite minority, women, in terms of their occupational decisions and their working careers. We labored under the handicap of not having an expert on women in our group. But we did our best to discuss the particular problems of women's occupational decisions and

women's careers in the labor market. It is surprising how little attention has been given to this problem, although recently some people have become interested in it. Our first conclusion was the women's occupational aspirations tend to be difficult to study because they are complicated by prior consideration of marital aspirations with the consequence that every conceivable combination of marriage and employment has to be taken into account. To a few women, a vocational career may take such precedence that marriage may be foregone. But for the rest of the women, any possible combination of marriage with occupation seems possible. And, the combination and the outcome will have varying effects depending on the stage of the life cycle of the family, the husband's occupation, his income, his values, the opportunities for women in the labor market, and a variety of other factors including the personality needs of the woman herself.

Secondly, we believe it difficult to study women's occupational decisions because many parents in our society do not support their daughters in certain occupational aspirations, either because they tend to allocate financial resources to sons or because they do not think that occupational achievement is particularly relevant for girls. This is an attitude that is probably changing but still is a dominant attitude in our society. Thirdly, it is also difficult to study women's occupational aspirations and choices because of the limited number and variety of occupations that really are open to women in our society. Thus, the statement of a choice may reflect realistic expectation rather than aspiration or ambition.

We believe that knowledge is needed on the extent to which women enter new low status occupations or established occupations but at a disadvantaged level, and particularly those occupations which emphasize personal service. We also felt that the re-entry phenomenon is a particularly interesting one for study. Many women after gaining the necessary training and entering a given occupation

subsequently drop out of it for family reasons. Then when they try to re-enter the work force they find that their original training and experiences may no longer qualify them for the same occupation or for the same level of responsibility for which they were formerly qualified.

SUMMARY OF TOPIC IV

by

Seymour Wolfbein

This is a new experience for me, I don't know about for you. Whether it's a speaking situation or a teaching situation, you expect some reaction from the audience.

Talking about audiences, I'm going to tell you a story, especially since my report is extraordinarily brief. With apologies to those of you who have heard me before, I'd like to tell you a story that Walter Heller tells. Since you are all sociologists and psychologists, I'll remind you of the fact that Walter Heller was chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors of the United States government. He is not only a brilliant economist but a very, very entertaining speaker. He tells this story of the time he was making a speech in Denver. (This is a true story.) He had a typically large audience. He began in his typically brilliant way, and as he came to the first pause, somebody from way out back of the room yelled out, "You're stupid!" Now we are taught in the Federal government that you never answer back, so Walter just gulped and began again. And sure enough, the next time he stopped to draw a breath, this character out in back of the room yelled out, "You're stupid!" Only this time Walter thought he detected a slur in the man's voice, so he was just laying for him the next time the guy yells out, "You're stupid!" and Walter comes right back and says, "Yes, and you're drunk," and the guy comes right back and says, "Yes, and tomorrow morning I'll be sober and you'll still be stupid!" This is by way of saying that maybe I should be thankful for the fact that I <u>can't</u> get any reaction from the audience. Also, I wanted to tell one story because I know very, very well that my dear friend Ralph Tyler here is going to tell a couple.

I think what I'm going to do is the same as Bob Dubin and see if I can give you just enough of the matter and get out of your way.

The topic, in case you don't recall, was: To what extent are extrapersonal situations effective limitors or determinants of occupational outcome? Seriously, I think that when all is said and done, three items emerged. First and most obvious, in view of the reports you have already had, extrapersonal situations were considered important, considered important as limitors and determinants and perhaps in many cases easing and lubricating. A variety of examples were given which I think were quite relevant to the project. The point was made, and a very important one, that the labor market itself, perhaps by definition, is allocative. It offers rewards, like income and fringe benefits, and also some other status items, and it can also inflict punishment. I don't think this has to be spelled out. There is a very important allocative process there, and obviously this is going to make it an important item, at least of context, to take into account. One of the major examples, if I remember, that was given in this session if not in another one, was that talking about young people and their choices and what determines them, the very fact that only five per cent of all work opportunities in the United States of America today are unskilled, in contrast to a figure that was much closer to twenty per cent a generation or so ago. This is, just in itself, an indication of how important some of the overriding trends affecting the labor market can be. Somebody made a very, very good point that the very epoch, the very time period in which a lot of these choices are made can itself be something that you definitely have to take into account. It might make a very big difference, as you trace occupational choice and career development, to know that a good part of it took place in the decade of the 30's when there was a depression, or in the decade of the 40's when there was a war, or the current decade, which is apparently more affluent. We also indicated that extrapersonal situations are not necessarily

confined to what is descriptively known as the labor market. There are many other parameters of an extrapersonal sort. There were two that I thought were particularly interesting, in terms of those that ought to be mentioned. I think it was Larry here who pointed out that there are a variety of legal barriers. For example, there are minimum wages; there are minimum ages; and you can't leave school legally until you are sixteen or eighteen, depending on the state you're in; and even if you wanted to put a lot of young people to work, sometimes it is very difficult in terms of a variety of legal barriers. What would happen, if some of these were removed, in terms of choice, the ability to make these choices?

Another one that might turn out to be very important, is maybe the reason why we are here, and that is the institution over the last several years of an enormous number of federal programs of training and retraining and education at all levels, and that that in itself as an exogenous factor can make an enormous difference in the pattern of occupational choice. This item number 1, this description of these extrapersonal situations, their variety, their character, we thought do lead to a number of research possibilities. It might be interesting to find out how responsive people really are, especially young people, to extrapersonal prerogatives, all the way from that to the question, "Can we make better projections of where we're going in the future?" and communicate that--would that make any difference? Too, the elimination of some of the legal barriers we just talked about--we even had a real good discussion, I thought, of what would happen if we could institutionalize in a better way a great variety of employment opportunities through better entrepreneurship. We got the classic examples that I get everywhere I go that if you could only get someone who will do your gardening or work in your household as a domestic, and it was pointed out the number of places this is already taking place, where an entrepreneur does get a staff together and goes from home to home. This can have a very substantial impact in terms of the status you give the particular

occupation and the rewards, financial and otherwise, that you can get.

The second broad item that was discussed was: "How do these extrapersonal parameters get transmitted to what I think a previous session called the actors, or those who were interested in the facts." And very briefly, there was an excellent discussion, I thought, of the great variety, the network, the communication systems, that exist in a place like the United States of America, where all this stuff is somehow imparted to the young people in particular, as well as to others, I guess. They vary all the way from something put out by the United States Department of Labor called the Occupational Outlook Handbook, used in all sorts of nefarious ways, to the information you get from radio and TV and what the sociologists seem to call peer groups. At any rate, they do differ. Out of this came, I think, a very important piece of advice for those who are in charge of the project here, and that is that you really ought to take a hard look, a real hard look, at what is being transmitted, how it gets transmitted, when, at what point all this lovely information gets transmitted, and finally, who does the transmitting. We got some very good examples from David and others of what can really happen when you change the "who," even sometimes in terms of the tone of voice, and the attitude toward the very information that is being purveyed.

So first we had a discussion on these extrapersonal matters; secondly, how do they get transmitted; and thirdly and finally, how about the people at whom all of this stuff is aimed? How do they ingest and digest all of this matter and finally come up in some kind of overt manner and make choices and actually behave in certain ways in the world of work? Now this, too, I thought was very well done. There was a substantial amount of discussion on what are the various parameters concerning individuals themselves that make a difference? Women were mentioned quite frequently, by you guess who. I think that Leona's point about the masculinity-femininity business, how certain things actually get filtered out at a very early age, makes a

very big difference. You can have all these lovely important extrapersonal things going on and they can be transmitted in all sorts of fascinating ways, but if you already have some built-in filters in one way of another, that itself can make a difference in how it finally gets ingested and digested and finally comes out in what you guys would want to measure.

So these were the three items that we played around with, and these are briefly some of the points that were discussed.

And finally, cutting across all three were the two points that a number of us made (and I admit that I yelled when I made them). This was also in terms of advice to the group. The first one was: Don't forget to dis-aggregate, and make sure that you've got all the possible variables you can, not only age, sex, color, marital status, geography--perhaps the obvious ones, but also a lot of the others that I learned from another session--from Jack here about body temperature, and interests, as for example, measured by the Strong Inventory. And seriously, item number one is very important in terms of being as complete as we can in the dis-aggregation. And the second one, of particular interest to some of us in government, so I may be speaking only for some us, but I think for the whole group, as you guys go and carry out this lovely project, we would love to see to what extent it really makes a difference when you increase the number and the variety of the encounters that an individual can have with these extrapersonal situations.

I think that is enough of the matter.

SUMMARY OF TOPIC V

by

Donald Super

In group five, we began by looking at the Ginzberg hypothesis. Although we had an economist in the group, the economist whose ideas were under discussion by sociologists and psychologists suffered a little bit at first from oversimplification. We did then redeem ourselves by recognizing that Ginzberg's developmental hypothesis is more complex and takes into account more variables than we had perhaps assumed. We did find the notion of life stages a useful scheme within which to work. We recognized the importance of individual differences in the ages at which behavior takes place, in the rate of development, in the degree to which the determinants that have been identified overlap each other in their effect. We noted that it isn't a matter of interest being important at one stage and of aptitude then suddenly becoming important, to be abruptly displaced by values. Rather, all of these are of importance in varying degrees, at varying times, even within one individual at one life stage.

We asked, "What are some of the other determinants of the age at which these developmental stages are entered or left?" Different terms were used. Among them were "encounters" and "developmental tasks," but whatever the language we used, we did attach considerable importance to the societal expectations, to the demands that are made of the developing youth and adolescent. These are determinants of attention to one's own interests, to aptitude requirements, or, at a later stage, to the reality of the labor market. Occupational choice summarizes many societal encounters for many people, for occupational choice is a choice of the kind of person one is to become and the kind of role one is to play in life. We recognized, too, that there are people for whom the occupational role is not the major

role, that there are people for whom the societal demands are not primarily occupational, and that in viewing life stages and role choices we need to take into account these other roles and other demands.

We then shifted our focus somewhat to the notion of self-concept, recognizing that the encounters with societal demands and the ways in which one copes with these developmental tasks contribute to the development of an image of oneself, and of the kinds of roles that are appropriate. We recognized that it is through interaction with other people, with objects, and with situations, that the individual gets feedback which contributes to this image of himself.

As a result of some questioning we noted that not everyone thinks in self-concept terms. Useful though this appraoch seems to be with certain kinds of subjects, we do encounter young people who do not seem to think in terms of the kinds of people they are. If we put the right kinds of questions, e.g., if we ask them "Are you tall or short? Are you dark or fair?" they can answer. They do have self-concepts, but they do not habitually think in such terms. They are not self-aware. This approach may therefore be of limited value with certain individuals, with people from certain subcultures, and at certain age levels.

We recognized that we need to think not just of the content of self concepts, that is, of the traits or the attributes of the self, but also in terms of the other characteristics of the content: self esteem, complexity, flexibility, and the clarity of the concept of self. We need to think not in terms of having a concept of oneself or not having one, but rather in terms of the degree of clarity of the self-concept. We noted that the other characteristics to which we need to attend are realism, the abstractness or concreteness, and stability of the self-concept.

These might be important as determinants of certain kinds of occupational

behavior, for example, the degree of commitment to an occupational choice or preference. If a person isn't clear as to what kind of person he is, should we anticipate that he will not have a clear vocational preference or choice? We might anticipate less stability of preference or choice in this person, and more difficulty in implementing a choice.

We shifted focus again to the question of initial commitment, a term used in one of the preliminary documents. There was difficulty in defining what was meant by initial commitment, because different people seemed to give the term different meanings. It was suggested that it might mean the first job, the first stable job, or (a definition of commitment which would require dropping the idea of an event at some point in time) a process which involves a sequence of decisions. One might inquire, "How far along in the sequence of decisions has a person gone? How reversible are the decisions that he has made?," to get at commitment, rather than thinking of entry into a training program or into an occupation as <u>the</u> act of commitment. We need to think in terms of not one outcome, but of a whole series of outcomes which are sequential in nature.

It became evident that different members of the group defined intial commitment differently because of their own differing interests. One person may be interested primarily in how high school students develop an occupational preference, and the preference itself is the outcome. Someone else is most interested in entry into the labor market, and entry is the outcome. Still another is interested primarily in the stable occupation or life work, a middle class concept if you like, but one with which many people are concerned. Depending on the interest of the researcher, a given variable may be either a predictor or a criterion.

Another question that came up in this connection was, "What is the object of our study? Is it the individual, is it the labor market, is it the interaction of

the individual and the labor market?" These were terms that were favored by people with backgrounds in some disciplines; call them organism, stimulus, and response, and you have the terminology used by others for the same objects of study. In the end we recognized that even though a particular researcher might want to focus on the individual and another on the labor market, a really comprehensive and adequate study that would give us answers with the desired utility must use a more complex model. It is the transactions between the individual and the labor market which must be taken into account. This consensus was helped by reference to a chart developed by a Social Science Research Council Seminar some ten years ago. In it the interactions of individual and society were plotted, leading to the point of occupational entry. The one criticism that was voiced of this diagram was that it dealt with occupational entry as though it were the ultimate, the only outcome in which one could be interested, instead of recognizing the sequence of decisions which actually constitute occupational choice.

Having come back to the notion of occupational entry with the aid of the SSRC model, we raised again the question of outcomes and outcome categories and explored these. There are preference categories, entry categories, and career categories. By entry category, for example, we mean an occupational classification, whether it is a two- or three-dimensional scheme. By a career category, we mean ways of describing vocational behavior which deal, not with specific occupations, but with the way in which the vocational development problem is being handled: floundering, trial, stagnation, and establishment.

We concluded that there is a real place here for pilot studies, and we gave a little attention to the nature of the pilot study that might be called for in the Oregon project. There was considerable agreement that a pilot study might well deal with the recent history of the job search. That is, a category of

individuals, for example, high school students not long before graduation, might be interviewed and then re-interviewed periodically over a period of several months so as to find out what they are doing vocationally, what their job search activities are. These activities might then be analyzed in order to give clues as to both process and outcome. The outcome categories to be studied in the project might well be arrived at by this empirical method.

We then dealt with the matter f irreversibility, coming back to the questions that had been posed in advance. Two meanings emerged. One was difficulty in changing. Obstacles to change are temporal in some instances, as when a person is so busy doing certain things that he doesn't have time to learn what he must do in order to make a change. Another temporal factor involves the perspective on how much time one would have to use new skills, to pursue a new occupation if one were to make the change. There are difficulties created by affective factors such as the self-concept. Coal miners retrained as power sewing machine operators were cited as an example: what kinds of obstacles are created by the concept of oneself as a very masculine coal miner being trained for a woman's occupation? There are facilitating factors such as the structure of the labor market. The fact that not only can you not be a coal miner, but that all the coal miners around you cannot be, makes it easier for you to accept the fact that power sewing machine operation may be a way to continue to maintain a masculine self-concept: if you learn this feminine occupation you will again be a breadwinner and head of the family, and therefore a real man.

The second kind of definition of irreversibility has to do with what might be most truly called irreversibility--the impossibility of reverting to an earlier status in order to make up education or training. The high school drop-out, aged 18 and reading like a fourth grader, wanting to make up some of his educational

deficiencies cannot become a fourth grader again: he is still age 18. He cannot turn back the clock. He may make up in some ways for deficiencies, but he must do so in a way that is appropriate to the 18-year-old and not to the fourth grader.

Problems of the life cycle and changes in values, in interests, in sources of satisfaction that accompany the life cycle came up for consideration. These are changes which aid or impede reversing. There was more than usual attention to the problems of men of 45, recognizing that this is a stage at which men do go through an involutionary phase. Perhaps one reason the adult coal miners found the occupation of power sewing machine operator more acceptable than expected was that they were at the age at which men typically become less active, less masculine really, in their interests and in their activities.

The Oregon Study may need to take into account the fact that the parental life cycle, the vocational development of the adult, has an impact on the developing child, not just at the time of entry into the labor market, but throughout the whole developmental process. Some of the changes in attitudes, aspirations and values of the parents will have impact on the developing child and adolescent.

Finally, we dealt with problems of role model, recognizing that we are interested in role models as influences. Research in this area needs to take into account both the role model and the influencing people who may not technically qualify as models. An occupational role model may be occupational not just because of job title or through the job title, but in terms of personal characteristics which are important. For example, the parent may encourage the child not to pursue the parental occupation, but rather an occupation which provides outlets for interests and abilities the parent considers important. This parent is therefore being an occupational role model even though his job title is not transmitted and not aspired to. Role models are important not only in terms of occupations, but also

in terms of working or not working, in terms of family roles, the use of leisure, or the use of non-work time. These roles also have impact and may help determine the vocational development of the individual. We raised questions concerning the child's perception of these models and their influences. How accurately does he perceive them? What is the scope of his perception? There are, for example, questions of differences in intra-family communication. Does the father talk about his work? Are the child's occupational horizons developed by intra-family communication? There are the extra-family communications which affect the scope of job horizons, the variety of occupational influences, and the extent to which various kinds of models are available.

Like the others who have summarized, I have inevitably reported from my own viewpoint. I hope that I have done justice to the very interesting and very stimulating discussion which took place in this group.

SUMMARY OF TOPIC VI

by

Ralph W. Tyler

Discussion topic VI, "What is the continuing development of occupation or career after the initial commitment?" focuses, really, upon three aspects: (1) to assess the success of the individual in the occupational setting, (2) to relate this to his previous planning, and (3) to analyze the job experience stage as another stage in the planning process. Our discussion dealt first with the problems and procedures involved in assessing the success of the individual in the occupational setting. We talked of the importance of treating separately the various types of jobs since indices of success are likely to differ among them. We thought this required the development of a more appropriate classification for jobs than the commonly used job classifications. We hoped that an imaginative classification could be worked out that takes into account jobs in terms of the way they are viewed by the worker, and in terms of what they provide for him. In the light of this, then, his success would include such matters as his job satisfaction, his satisfaction with the world of work, his satisfaction with the job setting (company, place, and so forth), his spouse's satisfaction, his success in meeting the requirements of the job (both in his terms and in his employer's terms). His success can be assessed more fully if we find out about the adaptations that he has made in the job and how these adaptations were made. Such things would be considered as changes in his use of time, new perceptions that he gains of the job and they way he makes adaptations to them, the new coping mechanisms that he develops, the new valuing that takes place in which he discovers some values in his work that he had not realized before and reacts to them, or eliminates some values that seemed important in his earlier planning. If he has made some of these adaptations, the use of sponsors or other

devices for getting changes accepted should be noted. A final aspect to examine in appraising his success is the adaptation he has made in his life outside the job which are related to it, noting especially the extra-job factors which impinge on his world of work. Our discussion implied a much more comprehensive appraisal of job success than earlier studies have involved.

We then talked of ways to relate occupational success to characteristics of earlier planning. We suggested correlating the planning categories with the success categories. We also discussed the usefulness of analyzing the continuity or discontinuity in the planning and directions of change both in planning and in job success. It was suggested that continuity in process and in direction may be important factors related to success.

In treating the job experience as another stage in the planning process, we thought that the same categories of data collection and analysis could be employed as those used in the earlier stage of planning before he has definitely entered upon a job. We would look particularly for continuity and discontinuity as he moves from the stage where he is looking ahead to a job to one where he is actually engaged in it.

We recognized the value of longitudinal studies, but realized that the time required would make them impractical in many cases, so we discussed stratified samples studied at different points in time--that is, groups of individuals who are similar in certain significant respects but who are at different stages in their careers: a few months after undertaking a job, some time later, some time later than that--a series of overlapping groups representing different points of time after entering the job could be studied. The purpose is to identify critical episodes or periods when activity, change, or redirection are greater than found at other times. This was viewed as important because it was our general hypothesis that there are certain periods of time after entering a job when change or recon-

sideration or planning is much more active. Among these critical periods are those in which the applicant for a job is selected or rejected, significant family episodes takes place, he is promoted or failed, the job has become obsolescent, he is given special treatment by his employer, and he becomes conscious of significant physiological changes.

The contribution that being selected or rejected for a job can make to his planning arises when he perceives what criteria are used in job selection, how the criteria are applied and who does it. Family episodes may contribute to planning in such matters as the size of the family setting limits to mobility and increasing concern for security, the presence of children and their changes with age providing new extra-job satisfactions and influencing his perception of the job. It is obvious that promotions, failures, loss of job through no fault of his own as through job obsolescence, special treatment by the employer as in being sent to a special training program, and physiological changes, can all impinge significantly on his perceptions of the world of work and influence his own planning. Whether these things happen, how they happen, and what difference they make are the questions for which answers or partial answers are sought in analyzing the job experience as another stage in the planning process.

We spent most of yesterday afternoon and all of this morning on methodological approaches. We talked about the following kinds of methodology: (1) Sociological studies that would be focused at a particular time on role performance, particularly performance in the job and performance at home; (2) social-psychological studies of the individual's perception of himself, his job, the world of work and his own relationship to the job and the work setting. (I think some of us were especially conscious of the difference between the person who views the world as effectively shaping him, in contrast to one who views the world as a system that he can learn

how to handle and to deal with actively); (3) psychological studies focused on personality development as related to the job, that is, how the individual uses the job either as resource or obstacle to maintain his personality and his concept of self; (4) operations research studies of the many factors within the job, the relationships of his home experiences and of his group experiences outside the home as they help to explain the development and life careers of individuals. We began to see the possibility of applying the procedures of systems analysis or operations research to career development studies. We could look at the input in terms of the individuals going into it, the selection and development processes that go on within the job itself, and the output in terms both of the satisfactions and the rewards of the job and also in job shifts and deviations on the way. Using this typical systems analysis, we saw both the possibility of treating a whole lifetime as a system, in which then there would component systems of the job, the home, and other arenas of life. But treating the entire lifetime as a system is a very big task. Some expressed a preference for taking the job situation as a system, conceiving it in open system terms and examining that to see how far the variance could be explained through that kind of system analysis, and if this was inadequate, then beginning to treat subsidiary systems like the home as a means of further explanation. Still others of the group including Mr. Wolfbein, emphasized the possibility of taking two concurrent systems of analyses with overlapping of individuals in it, one treating the job as a system and the other with the home as a system, and analyzing the development of individuals within each of these two systems, seeing in one case how the job impinges upon the home system and, in the other case, how the home system impinges upon job satisfaction and job performance.

This summarizes very briefly the discussions in our group. Although we used the phrasing of the topic and the questions that appeared in the original outline,

I think we treated as well the questions raised later by Mr. Ellis as a partial rephrasing. These were: How does one's prior orientation to work affect adaptation to the work role? Does it in any way affect the floundering period? Such investigations as we proposed should throw light on these questions as well as the earlier ones.

LIST OF BOOKS, ARTICLES AND REPORTS

AVAILABLE AT THE CONFERENCE

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